/74 cont./

157 In short, Bakaïrí kúra, the Bakaïrí are good. It would be foolish to misunderstand them in the Rousseau sense, for there was not a trace of any kind of idealism, they were nothing but the product of very simple and undisturbed conditions and gave the visitor who approached with eyes accustomed to motion and strife
000 a picture of an "idyl." Whether one comes from Giessbach, river, or sea, one will feel the magic of a quiet lagoon, that is all.

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II.

Psychological notes about the attitude of the Bakaïrí toward new things. Limits of understanding. Studies with the one on special duty. Difficulties of understanding and of linguistic recording: substantives, verbs, superordinate concepts.

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152 I have reported about the interest that the Bakaïrí took in my clothing. It gradually turned to the pockets in particular, and they soon knew exactly what was hidden in this one and what in that one.

"Had I made shirt and trousers myself?" This question, which annoyed me, always came up. "Had I made the hammock, the moskiteiro myself?" They were strangely affected by the fact that there was nothing that came to light in all my property for which I had answered in the affirmative. It was clearly to be seen that the objects whose origin they could picture to themselves to a certain extent also more actively occupied their attention. The texture of the Paraguayan hammock was felt and eagerly discussed every day.

They wanted to have everything. "Ura" "(it is) mine" was the simple explanation. The men preferred for themselves the practical thing, for wives and children the ornaments, for themselves knives, for the former beads. At sight of the beads, the women became positively excited and only my tin plate was sought with the same covetousness. "Buttons" seemed to be re-
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438 garded as a kind of bead. Among several women I discovered ornaments that came from our first expedition and had traveled

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301 from the Batovy to the Kulisehu. I was confronted by one
438 woman who wore nothing but a copper button on a string on her breast, and on this button was the 8 of the eighth Cuyaban battalion, to which our soldiers had belonged at that time. "Is it tuchú,
301 stone?" asked these living prehistorics. Of course, the beads were likewise stone, and, on account of their gay colors, they
153 preferred them to gold, which left them quite indifferent. I
179 had given them a few pins and had also showed them a needle, the only one that I had with me: they brought a pin back to me and asked me to make a hole in it, like the one in the needle.

Most peculiar was the alacrity with which they classified the things unfamiliar to them among those that were familiar to them and also immediately assigned familiar names to them directly and without any restrictive additions. They cut their
[412] hair with sharp shells or the teeth of the piranha fish, and my
[237] scissors, the object of unreserved delight, which cut hair so smoothly and evenly, were simply called "piranha tooth." The mirror was "water!" "Show the water," they cried when they wanted to see the mirror. And I made a much slighter impression with it than I had expected.

The compass was called "sun," the watch "moon." I had showed them that, no matter how I turned and twisted the case, the needle always pointed to the highest position of the sun, and the very similar watch, whose spring they said was a hair, seemed to them the natural counterpart, for the /76/ special reason that it "did not sleep at night." Often in the middle of the conversation they would demand that I take out the watch, and then they would laugh very contentedly when it was actually awake and ticking.

Nothing would be more erroneous than to think that this sincere curiosity and admiration was based on an actual thirst for knowledge or a deeper need of understanding. They never got beyond the question: "Did you make that?" No, I simply did my circus act, I displayed my tricks, and they were pleased that at any moment I could show them in all elegance and never disgraced myself. The most baffling example of superficial satisfaction